

No more muddy boots

Crews begin paving dusty parking lot

By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts
USAF

MIAMI – No more will you dread walking out to your car because of the gravel, dust, or water puddles often found in the overflow parking lot. That is because con-

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Command  **Run**

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tract work crews recently began construction efforts to pave this murky acreage located just east of the U.S. Southern Command Headquarters building.

According to Herschel Veitch, a real estate project officer for the Army Corps of Engineers working at the Miami Project Office, the improvements will add 520 paved parking spaces to the existing 500 – hopefully in time for the

next rainy season.

The construction began in late December and is scheduled to be complete by early April. Work crews are currently landscaping the property, installing 15 drainage catch basins, running electrical power for lighting, and laying down curbing for entrances and islands.

Michael L. Rhodes, special assistant to the commander-in-chief for Quality of Life Affairs, said the additional paved parking

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Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

The overflow parking lot is being landscaped in preparation for paving. The actual construction began in late December and is scheduled to be completed by early April, in plenty of time for the rainy season.

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spots mean people no longer have to turn their ankles in the gravel, or track dust and mud into the building. And that's a good thing, considering parking availability has been a hot, contentious issue for people over the last several years, he said.

When the command arrived in Miami in 1997, overflow parking was in the grass on either side of the main entrance. But when it rained "people were literally in mud piles. It was ridiculous," Rhodes explained. "The quick interim fix was to put down some gravel out there



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

The U.S. Southern Command Headquarters currently has 500 paved parking spots. When work crews finish work on the overflow parking lot, an additional 520 spots will be created.

where people are currently parking."

He said the long-term solution has always been to pave the gravel parking

area. Unfortunately, the command doesn't own the land, and it has been a difficult process getting approval for the parking up-

grade, Rhodes said.

"I think probably the frustrating thing for folks who weren't sure what was going on was that they got the perception that nothing was ever going to happen," Rhodes stressed. "So it's certainly a lift to know something is happening."

Rhodes said the long-term plan is happening right now because Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, the commander-in-chief, has been a tremendous advocate and supporter of the parking improvements.

In fact, Rhodes said, "the general hoped the parking lot would be done by Christmas – it was supposed to be his present to the command."

Southern Command responds quickly to Venezuela disaster

By Capt. James M. Rich, USMC

Public Affairs Officer,
JTF Fundamental Response

MAIQUETIA, Venezuela — From a U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter tracing Venezuela's northern coast, anyone could imagine how this beautiful South American country must have looked just six weeks ago. From the blue-green waters of the Caribbean Sea, mountains of deep forest green rise sharply to the clouds. Plush resort towns with modern high-rises, pools and beach clubs dot the coast where many of the wealthy of Caracas got away from it all.

However, there are also the tiny dwellings that are crammed up the



Torrential rains in December washed away this Venezuelan roadway. U.S. military were in Venezuela as early as Dec. 17 to provide assistance after deadly mudslides devastated the country's Caribbean Coast.

hillsides on many tiers. From above, you look for the streets and wonder how people get to their homes. Then you see the winding stairways up the hills and the narrow alleyways and realize that streets aren't needed where there are no cars.

Through coastal towns from Catia La Mar to Anare, you see what

at first appears to be a wide, unpaved thoroughfare. Then you realize that the "road" widens as it rises up the mountain. It is cluttered with rocks of varying sizes, from rubble to boulders. Parts of cars and houses poke

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Photo by Army Maj. Michael Regan

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm (second from left), U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, gets briefed on the relief efforts during his trip to Venezuela Dec. 29.

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up through the dirt and mud. In several places, streams of varying width

flow through the flattened and clear paths to the sea.

In the sea itself, thousands of tree trunks float like toothpicks.

The deep forest green

mountainside is scarred brown in many places from the dozens of individual slides. "Mudslide" is a misleading term; it doesn't take into account the devastation of the boulders and trees crashing through the homes of the rich and poor alike — gravity did not discriminate.

"This beach was very famous," says a Venezuelan Army captain stationed at Camuri Grande. He is sad to think that the rest of his tour in this town won't be the same.

"The beaches were white sand. The water was blue and clear," he said. The coastal waters are now dyed brown with mud, and the sand and the beach clubs lie beneath the mud,

rocks and driftwood.

Bearing the brunt in these resort towns are not only the playgrounds of the rich, but the tourist industry that supports the local population.

Also in this town, the walls of Simon Bolivar University stand like ruins. A four-wheel drive vehicle drags a Fiat sedan out of the swollen river that now covers the coastal road.

In Anare, children carefully try to cross the rushing stream where a bridge no longer connects the coast road through this working-class town.

Just to the west of the fallen bridge, townspeople

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use the blocked coast road as a dump. Looking nearly straight up from this makeshift landfill, water and dirt still trickle down the shear wall of earth onto the road.

Water service is out in this town, as it is in Camuri Grande, and many other parts of the states of Vargas and Miranda.

These are not scenes from a month ago, when unseasonable rains first saturated the mountains and devastated this proud nation. This

was Jan. 13.

Although much of the Venezuelan littorals will need a great deal of work over several years to return to normal, the emergency phase is

over. While the flooding and landslides may have killed more than 30,000, thousands more remain displaced from their homes. However, the immediate danger

Residents in Maiquetia, Venezuela gather at the water point to collect their ration for the day. Mudslides hit the area after 133 gallons of rainfall per square yard fell. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Tina M. Ackerman)



through the greatest catastrophe this country has experienced in nearly a century.

Units from Special Operations Command South stationed in Puerto Rico were first on the scene.

U H - 60 Blackhawks and CH-47 Chinooks from the U.S. Army's 1st Battalion of the 228th Aviation Regiment from Soto Cano, Honduras also responded quickly in the emergency phase, moving

has passed.

Many nations sprang into action to assist. Americans arrived to provide assistance as early as Dec. 17 to help the Venezuelan people

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nearly 4,000 civilians to the safety of the Simon Bolivar International Airport.

The battalion has flown more than 400 hours and delivered hundreds of thousands of pounds of supplies in support of the humanitarian assistance mission.

Close behind them, the 219th Quartermaster Detachment, Puerto Rico National Guard, arrived and began purifying water with Reverse-Osmosis Water Purification Units. As of Jan. 13, the ROWPU units had puri-

fied nearly 500,000 gallons of water.

In total, 250 U.S. servicemembers have participated in the humanitarian assistance mission. JTF Fundamental Response, commanded by Air Force Col. William E. Osborne of Special Operations Command South, continues to perform these disaster relief missions.

More than 100 soldiers, sailors, airmen and one Marine participating in Operation Fundamental Response in Venezuela today know that their efforts are appreciated.

Venezuelans are by and large a proud and somewhat reserved people; how-

ever, they show their appreciation in many ways.

The mayor of Caracas and his wife have "adopted" the Americans here, and have provided them with local food and beverages. Dinners and receptions for the servicemembers who spent their Christmas and New Year here were provided by our host nation.

Despite justifiable pride in our work, the end of U.S. participation must ultimately come to an end. Although the Venezuelan recovery may last years, they wish to do it themselves, a spirit that Americans can certainly admire.



During December, the coastal area received 133 gallons of rainfall per square yard which is equivalent to what normally falls in one year. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Tina M. Ackerman)



Legion of Merit

Chilean Vice Adm. Hernan Couyoumdian, chief of National Defense Staff, presents the Chilean Legion of Merit to Army Maj. Jesus Vazquez, J-5 Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate, during an award ceremony Jan. 14 in Santiago, Chile. U.S. Ambassador to Chile, John O'Leary (Left) also participated in the ceremony. Vazquez, a desk officer in the Southern Region Politico-Military Division, received the award for his tremendous work in fostering an improved relationship between the armed forces of Chile and the United States.

In the news

Congratulations to the following Army lieutenant colonels who were selected for promotion to colonel in December 1999:

- William C. Bradshaw, SCJ3
- Emilio T. Gonzalez, SCCC
- Jorge R. Matos, Argentina

Congratulations to the following Marine Corps majors who were selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel in January 2000:

- Lawrence J. Pleis, III
- Mark D. VanKan

Congratulations to the following Army majors who were on the Command and Staff College Selection List in December 1999:

- Allan L. Bilyeu, SCJ8
- Michael E. Brown, SOCSO
- Cliffords P. Crow, SCJ2
- Kurt A. Frulla, SCJ4
- Jose A. Torres, SCDC

Editor's note: If you know someone deserving of recognition, E-mail Tech. Sgt. Leon Roberts, the Command Run editor, with all the details (robertsl@hq.southcom.mil).

This is how we do it

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, addressed members of the press Jan. 6 at the Main Conference Room who were visiting for the CINC's Media Day.

The general explained the mission and future of the command, and then answered numerous questions about Colombia and Panama, and other areas within the command's area of responsibility. Some of the media present included representatives from the Miami Herald, New York Times, Nuevo Herald, Sun-Sentinel, Diario Las Americas, CNN, Reuters, EFE Wire Service, Univision, Miami Today, and Vista Magazine.

(Photo by USN
Lt. Cmdr. Jane Campbell)



News briefs

Superbowl event

A Superbowl Extravaganza is planned from 4 to 10 p.m. Sunday at the Police Benevolence Association located at 10680 NW 25th Street.

A trivia contest, games, pool and dart tournaments are planned. The event is free. For more information, call Suzette Rubet, Directorate of Community Activities, at (305) 437-2639.

Chili cookoff

The Directorate of Community Activities is providing transportation for a day trip from 10:30

a.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 5 for people interested in entering the KISS 99 15th Annual Country Chili Cookoff at C.B. Smith Park in Pembroke Pines, Fla.

Participants are responsible for purchasing their own ticket for the chili cookoff. The KISS 99 van will be in the SOUTHCOM parking lot to sell tickets Jan. 31.

For more information, call Suzette Rubet at (305) 437-2639.

Resort condos

Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation has announced a Space Available

Voucher Program for resort condos.

Resort Condominiums International, the largest time share exchange company in the world, is offering DoD and Coast Guard personnel the opportunity to book a seven-night luxury vacation, on a space available basis, for just \$209.

Simply call the RCI reservation center at 1-800-724-9988 and provide account number 7033-00000.

The RCI reservationist will provide information about specific resort availability on the dates you choose. Settle on a resort

and date, then provide your credit card number to reserve.

It's that simple. A confirmation number will be sent via U.S. Mail within 24 hours.

Typical resorts are located in Europe, Latin America, and throughout the United States. RCI has more than 3,500 resorts at locations throughout the world.

For more information, or to learn about specific resort amenities, visit the MWR office and ask to see the RCI Resort Condominiums Resource Book or look on the Internet at <http://www.armymwr.com>.

Dr. Martin Luther King honored, remembered

**By Army Staff Sgt.
Kristine Bacharach**
U.S. Southern Command
Public Affairs

This year's theme for Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday was, "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On, Not a Day Off."

While most took advantage of the 4-day holiday Jan. 14-17 in honor of King's birthday, a remembrance ceremony gave the U.S. Southern Command the opportunity to honor King with "a day on."

The ceremony began with excerpts from the speech given at the Mason Temple in Memphis, Tenn. on the eve of King's assassination read by Cmdr.

Damon Singleton, policy and strategy action officer from the J-5 Directorate.

A slide show was presented displaying photos of significant events in King's life. But what really brought the slides to life was the Ebenezer United Church Ensemble. They sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing," during the slide show.

USMC Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, U.S. Southern Command chief of staff and host of the ceremony, introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Albert E. Dotson.

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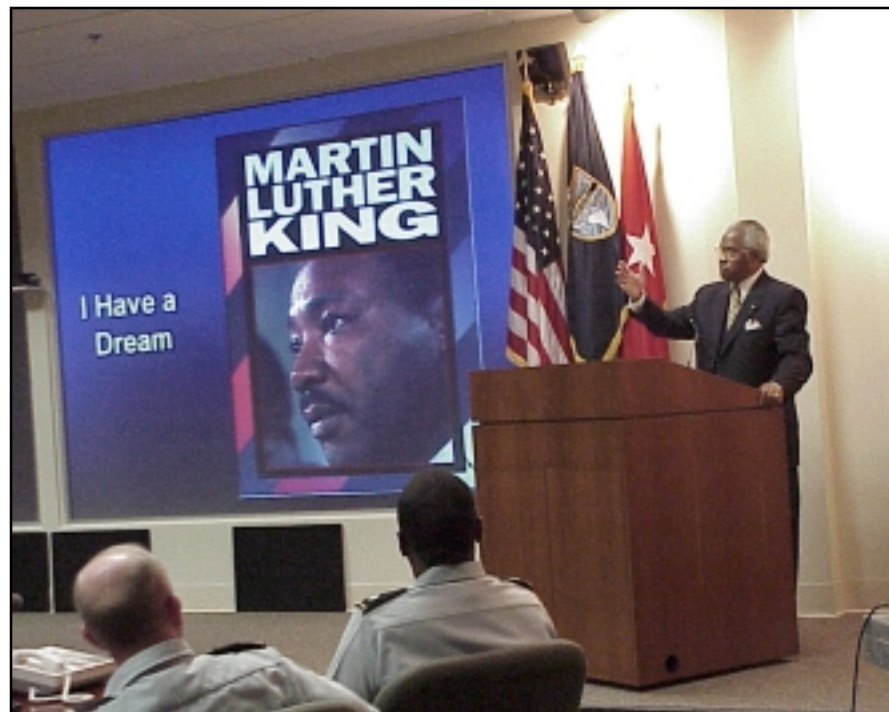


Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach

Dr. Albert E. Dotson, Chairman and CEO of Puryear, Inc., and Dotson Enterprises, Inc., speaks to members of U.S. Southern Command during the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. remembrance ceremony January 24.

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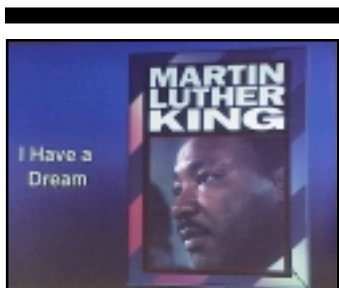
Dotson, chairman and CEO of Puryear, Inc., and Dotson Enterprises, Inc., knew the King family personally.

"I'm overwhelmed by the fact that I'm called upon to say a few words about my friend, Martin."

Dotson reflected on how the King family affected his life.

"We met Dr. King in 1962, we got up close and personal with the King family in 1973," he said.

When King's mother, Alberta King was killed,



The "I Have A Dream" slide shows King and his infamous words.

Jan. 17 was Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Dotson remembered what Martin Luther King, Sr. said to his family and to mourners.

"He said, 'Children, let us not cry, and let us not be sorrowed. Let us give thanks to God for what we have left.'"



Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach

Shawn Williams, a member of the Ebenezer United Church Ensemble, plays keyboard as Jill Bethel, David Smith and Valerie Thomas (left) sing, "We Shall Overcome," during the King remembrance ceremony Jan. 24.

This is just testament to the character of the King family. They used love to get them through struggle and loss.

The one thing that Dotson wanted to focus on was love. He saw how the King family used love to

overcome whatever troubles came their way. They used love in everything they did.

"And if Martin was standing here today, the one thing that Martin would say is, 'Let's show love. No matter

what's going on in the world, let's show love."

The ceremony concluded with a benediction by Rev. Dr. Jimmy L. Brown and the Ebenezer United Church Ensemble sang "We Shall Overcome."



Esther Valenzuela, wife of Maj. Gen. Alfred A. Valenzuela, deputy commander in chief, chats with a little boy hospitalized at Jackson Memorial Hospital during a holiday visit there Dec. 19.

Delivery of toys bring children bundles of joy

By Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach
U.S. Southern Command
Public Affairs

MIAMI – Sleigh bells rang and children sang, but this was no ordinary

holiday occasion. Members of U.S. Southern Command teamed up with Dr. Robert Picard, a colonel in the Florida Army National Guard, and

volunteers from the Hearing Research Institute, to bring mountains of toys and gifts to children hospitalized at Jackson Memorial Hospital over the holidays.

SOUTHCOM soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and family members, including Esther Valenzuela, wife of Maj. Gen. Alfred A. Valenzuela, deputy commander in chief, showed up bright and early on Dec. 19, 1999 at the hospital doors. They unloaded a van full of toys, but



Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach

Diana Torres, a logistics management specialist from the J-4 Directorate, gives a stuffed animal Dec. 19 to a young patient at Jackson Memorial Hospital.

had no way to transport the mountain of toys to the children's rooms. Hospital workers scrambled to find a

solution, when one worker suggested a perfect answer.

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Toys

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A gurney served as a make-shift sleigh. Volunteers rushed two gurneys overflowing with Christmas goodies to greet many ill children. One of the volunteers brought along her guitar and played seasonal music while volunteers and children sang along. They went from room to room to give each child a special present and to visit them.

"The kids seemed overjoyed

that someone took time out to be with them during this difficult time, said USAF Maj. Liz Almeida, executive officer to the deputy commander in chief. "I saw that they were surprised at the kindness and love out there that is directed at them," she added.

And it was evident that the feeling of joy and love touched not only the children, but also the many volunteers who gave their time.

"We don't realize the happiness that we can cause by just getting in-



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach

David Williams, a vehicle operator for the U.S. Southern Command's Transportation Office, guides the gurney full of toys for hospitalized children through the hallway at Jackson Memorial Hospital.

involved in the community," said Diana Torres, a logistics management spe-

cialist from the J-4 Directorate. "I'll never forget the looks on the faces of

some of the children when I handed them just a stuffed animal."

Feel good about yourself, tutor a student

**By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts
USAF**

Command Run Editor

MIAMI -- Did you know the U.S. Southern Command has a partnership program with several local schools to tutor and mentor children?

You can use your years of education and life experience to help local students improve their grades and perspective about the importance of education.

Two schools were chosen by USMC Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, U.S. Southern Command chief of staff, for this

year's Partners in Education Program -- Henry D. Perry Middle School in Broward and Ponce De Leon Middle Community School in Miami-Dade. They were chosen because they were "D" grade schools, based on the Governor's A+ program, and because many of the command's personnel live nearby.

In December, Ponce provided a list of 69 students in need of mentoring and tutoring and shortly thereafter the first visit of SOUTHCOM personnel took place at both schools.

To date, 32 military

and civilian members from the command have received the required training to tutor at-risk students in reading and mathematics as well as other mentoring and tutoring procedures.

The early feedback is that many of the command's participants are really enthused about helping the kids improve at school and in life.

If you want to get involved and enjoy making a difference in the local community, join up and be a tutor. You'll feel good about helping a child in need. It's easy to get involved in the program.

Army Maj. Rick McKinstry, J-3 Operations Directorate, at (305) 437-4331 and Air Force Master Sgt. Randy Rought, J-2 Logistics Directorate, at (305) 437-4720 are the Perry coordinators. Air Force Capt. Jack Miller, Public Affairs, at (305) 437-1205 and Army Chief Warrant Officer Rick Wilde, J-5 Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate, at (305) 437-2679 are the Ponce coordinators.

Give them a call for more information... and then take it a step further and get involved! You can make a big difference.

Command Run feedback

The following comments have recently been E-mailed to the *Command Run* by our readers.

(Editor's note: This section is where the editorial staff will print various comments about this publication sent via E-mail or snail mail by our readers.)

"While procrastinating, and taking a forbidden 10 minute lunch break at 2:45 p.m. (wheew!), I was nosing around the SCNET site and found the Command Run! What a great idea and great paper. I really enjoyed it, but it extended my forbidden lunch hour to a whole 30 minutes!"

"I'd like to say thanks. The Command Run is entertaining

and informative. From my point of view, it is refreshing to see all different types of personnel mentioned. As a contractor and a reservist that has worked for SOUTHCOM in the past, it's a pleasure to see civilians and contractors mentioned. It pulls us together and allows us to feel gratitude for being part of a team that works well together."

"Just read it... loved it! Please keep up the good work."

"I don't want to put a damper on the Command Run E-paper initiative because I believe facilitating the distribution of information to those with a need-to-know is important. However, the

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Command Run

Comments about the
Command Run can be E-mailed to
robertsl@hq.southcom.mil

Command Spotlight (Inaugural issue, Dec. 17, 1999) on page 23 is in my opinion a potential force protection concern if made available on the Internet edition of the paper. The distribution of the personal information about command personnel over the Internet may assist our enemies with targeting and exploitation. Why make an individual a target of opportunity and make it easier for our adversaries to do our personnel or the command harm? The spotlight includes a photo, the individual's name, rank, position, place of employment, spouse name and position, and other personal details."

tion are a common place in military and commercial newspapers worldwide. Whether in a military newspaper or even in the Hometown News Release Program, people participate because they enjoy and deserve being publically recognized for their chosen professions and jobs well done.)

Comment here
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Command Spotlight



Name: Army Sgt. Kerry R. Stein

Organization: J-2 Intelligence Directorate International Engagements Branch

Duty title: NCO in charge

Time in service: 3 years

Hometown: Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Hobbies: Reading, running, playing with two dogs, and gardening

Most embarrassing moment: While at Primary Leadership Development Course, in the dark, I fell into a fighting position that was so deep that no one could hear me yelling for help to get out.

Favorite duty station: U.S. Southern Command

Career Highlights: Recently being named U.S. Southern Command's Junior Enlisted Person of the Quarter, going to Airborne School in September 1997, and going to PLDC in November 1999.

Command Run

is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the *Command Run* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the U.S. Southern Command Public Affairs Office. Deadline for submissions is 5 p.m. Friday, a week before publication (the last Friday of each month). The public affairs staff reserves the right to edit all submissions to journalistic standards. All photos are official photos unless otherwise noted. Acceptance of input by the public affairs staff does not guarantee publication.

* * * * *

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Army Col. Ronald B. Williams.....*Director of Public Affairs*

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Army Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach..... *Assistant editor*



News Releases

If you are recognized for an award, a promotion, an impending transfer, education and training achievements, or participation in military exercises, fill out a **Hometown News Release**.

Your friends and family back home will appreciate reading about your accomplishments. All active-duty and civilian workers are eligible and the

process is easy. Army and Air Force members can fill out a HNR by obtaining a copy of DD Form 2266 or using the computer generated version of Delrina Form Flow. Also, Navy members can fill out a NAVSO 5724/1 form.

Participants should send the accomplished form to Public Affairs with attached copy of any award citation.



A helping hand

Army Spc. Edward Rodriguez (Right), from 978th Military Company, Fort Bliss, Texas, assists residents as they cross the water in Macuto, Venezuela Jan. 14 after the disastrous mudslides hit the city and coastal region in mid-December. An estimated 30,000 people were killed and approximately 400,000 people displaced. (U.S. Navy Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Tina M. Ackerman)